

COMMITTEE RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR THE
117TH CONGRESS
OF THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
FEBRUARY 11, 2021



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RULES OF THE COMMITTEE
ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FOR THE 117TH CONGRESS
RULE 1—GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) Applicability of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.—

In General.—The Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives (the House) are the rules of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs (Committee) and its Subcommittees so far as applicable.

(b) Rules of the Subcommittees.—Each Subcommittee of the Committee is a part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable. Written rules of the Committee, not inconsistent with the rules of the House, shall be binding on each Subcommittee of the Committee.

(c) Incorporation of House Rule on Committee Procedure.—Clause 2 of House Rule XI, which pertains entirely to Committee procedure, is incorporated and made part of the rules of the Committee so far as applicable.

(d) Privileged Motions.—In the Committee, a motion to recess from day to day, a motion to recess subject to the call of the Chair (within 24 hours), and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution if printed copies are available, shall be privileged and decided without debate.

(e) Conferences.—Pursuant to clause 2(a)(3) of House Rule XI, the Chair is authorized to offer a motion under clause 1 of House Rule XXII whenever the Chair considers it appropriate.

(f) Vice Chair.—Pursuant to clause 2(d) of House Rule XI, the Chair of the Committee shall designate the Vice Chair of the Committee.

(g) Taking of Depositions.—Pursuant to section 3(b) of House Resolution 8 of the 117th Congress, the Chair upon consultation with the Ranking Minority Member may order the taking of depositions, including pursuant to subpoena, by a member or counsel of the Committee. Depositions taken by a member or counsel of the Committee shall be subject to regulations issued by the Committee on Rules and printed in the Congressional Record.

(h) Subpoenas.—Pursuant to clause 2(m) of House Rule XI, subpoenas may be authorized and issued by the Committee in the conduct of any investigation or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present.

(i) Open Meetings and Hearings.—Meetings and hearings of the Committee shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of House Rule XI.

(j) Motions, Reduced to Writing.—Every motion made to the Committee and entertained by the Chair shall be reduced to writing upon demand of any member, and a copy made available to each member present.

(k) Decorum.—The Chair shall enforce decorum including with regard to actions that impact the health and safety of Members, staff, and anyone else present, or impedes the business of the Committee.

RULE 2—COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(a) Notice Requirements for Meetings.—The Chair shall furnish each member of the Committee with the date, place, and a list of measures and subjects to be considered at a Committee meeting, which may not commence earlier than the third calendar day on which members have notice thereof (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day).

(b) Availability of Texts.—At least 48 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of legislation, including any amendment in the nature of a substitute to such bills or resolutions that shall first be recognized by the Chair, the text of such legislation shall be made publicly available in electronic form.

(c) In an emergency that does not reasonably allow for the notice as required in paragraph (a), the Chair may waive the notice requirement with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member; or if the Committee so determines by majority vote of the quorum required under Committee Rule 4(a). An announcement made under this subparagraph shall be published promptly in the Daily Digest and made publicly available in electronic form.

(d) Amendments.—To the maximum extent practicable, amendments to a measure or matter noticed under paragraph (b) shall be submitted in writing or electronically to the designee of both the Chair and Ranking Member and made available electronically to each member of the Committee at least 24 hours prior to the consideration of the measure or matter. The Chair may use his or her discretion to give priority to amendments submitted in advance.

(e) Transcripts.—Transcripts of markups shall be recorded and may be published in the same manner as hearings before the Committee.

(f) Additional Meetings.—The Chair of the Committee may call and convene, as the Chair considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet for such purpose pursuant to the call of the Chair.

(g) Congressional Budget Office Scoring.—The Committee shall not include any bill or resolution for consideration during a Committee markup which is not accompanied by an accounting from the Congressional Budget Office of the mandatory and discretionary costs or savings associated with such bill or resolution.

The accounting from the Congressional Budget Office need not be official, but is expected to provide Committee members with an approximation of the budgetary impact a bill or resolution may have prior to any vote to favorably forward or report such bill or resolution. The requirements of this paragraph may be waived by a majority of Committee members, a quorum being present.

(h) Notice and Approval of Committee Investigative Reports or Studies.—Only those investigative reports or studies approved by a majority vote of the Committee at a meeting at which a quorum is present may be ordered printed, unless otherwise required by the rules of the House of Representatives.

A proposed investigative report or study shall not be considered in the Committee unless the report has been available to the members of the Committee for at least seven calendar days before consideration of such proposed report or study in the Committee.

RULE 3—HEARINGS

(a) Notice.—(1) The Chair, in the case of a hearing to be conducted by the Committee, shall publicly announce the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted on any measure or matter at least one week before the commencement of that hearing, unless in accordance with clause 2(g)(3)(B) of House Rule XI—

(A) the Chair, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, determines that there is good cause to begin the hearing at an earlier date, or

(B) the Committee determines by majority vote of the quorum required under Committee Rule 4(a) that a hearing may begin earlier than one week after announcement of the hearing as required under this subsection. An announcement made under this subparagraph shall be published promptly in the Daily Digest and made publicly available in electronic form.

(b) Requirements for Testimony.—

(1) Pursuant to clause 2(g)(5) of House Rule XI, each witness who is to appear before the Committee shall file with the clerk of the Committee, at least 48 hours (exclusive of weekends and holidays) in advance of his or her appearance, or at such other time as designated by the Chair after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, a written statement of his or her proposed testimony. Each witness shall, to the greatest extent practicable, provide a copy of such written testimony in an electronic format prescribed by the Chair. Each witness shall limit initial presentations to a brief summary of the written statement.

(2)(A) In the case of a witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts, grants, or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the past 36 months by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing, and a disclosure of whether the witnesses is a fiduciary (including, but not limited to, a director, officer, advisor, or resident agent)

of any organization or entity that has an interest in the subject matter of the hearing

(B) The disclosure required by this rule shall include the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing and the amount and country of origin of any payment, or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(c) Calling and Questioning Witnesses.—

(1) Committee members may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chair of the Committee for that purpose, and only for a 5-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to question a witness. The questioning of witnesses in Committee hearings shall be initiated by the Chair, followed by the Ranking Minority Member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority. Except as otherwise announced by the Chair at the beginning of a hearing, members who are present at the start of the hearing will be recognized before other members who arrive after the hearing has begun. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chair shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage the members of the majority.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) regarding the 5-minute rule, and pursuant to clause 2(j) of House Rule XI, the Chair after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may permit a specified number of Committee members to question a witness for longer than 5 minutes. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this paragraph shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate. In no event shall the Chair allow a member to question a witness for an extended period under this rule until all members present have had the opportunity to ask questions under the 5-minute rule. The Chair after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member may permit Committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods. The time for extended questioning of witnesses by staff shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(3) Pursuant to clause 2(k) of House Rule XI, the Chair at a hearing shall announce in an opening statement the subject of the hearing, and a copy of the Committee rules and of clause 2 of House Rule XI shall be made available to each witness on request.

(A) Witnesses at hearings may be accompanied by their own counsel for the purpose of advising them concerning their constitutional rights. The Chair may punish breaches of order and decorum, and of professional ethics on the part of counsel, by censure and exclusion from the hearings; and the Committee may cite the offender to the House for contempt.

(B) Whenever it is asserted by a member of the Committee that the evidence or testimony at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person, or it is asserted by a witness that the evidence or testimony that the witness would give at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate the witness—

(i) notwithstanding clause 2(g)(2) of House Rule XI, such testimony or evidence shall be presented in executive session if, in the presence of the number of members required under Committee Rule 4(a), the Committee determines by vote of a majority of those present that such evidence or testimony may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person; and

(ii) the Committee shall proceed to receive such testimony in open session only if the Committee, a majority being present, determines that such evidence or testimony will not tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person.

In either case the Committee shall afford such person an opportunity voluntarily to appear as a witness, and receive and dispose of requests from such person to subpoena additional witnesses.

(C) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Chair shall receive and the Committee shall dispose of requests to subpoena additional witnesses.

(D) Evidence or testimony taken in executive session, and proceedings conducted in executive session, may be released or used in public sessions only when authorized by the Committee, a majority being present.

(E) In the discretion of the Committee, witnesses may submit brief and pertinent sworn statements in writing for inclusion in the record. The Committee is the sole judge of the pertinence of testimony and evidence adduced at its hearing.

(F) A witness may obtain a transcript copy of the testimony of such witness given at a public session or, if given at an executive session, when authorized by the Committee.

(4) Non-Committee members may be invited to sit at the dais for and participate in Committee hearings with the unanimous consent of the members present. Further, non-Committee members may be recognized for questioning of witnesses but only after all Committee members have first been recognized.

(5) Pursuant to House Rule XI clause 2(j)(1), when a hearing is conducted by the Committee on any measure or matter, the minority members of the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chair of a majority of those minority members before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of the hearing thereon.

RULE 4—QUORUM AND RECORD VOTES; POSTPONEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS

(a) Working Quorum.—A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for business, except that two members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

(b) Quorum for Reporting.—No measure or recommendation shall be reported unless a majority of the members of the Committee or Subcommittee are present.

(c) Record Votes.—A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present or, in the apparent absence of a quorum, by any one member. With respect to any record vote on any motion to amend or report, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the report of the Committee on the bill or resolution.

(d) Prohibition Against Proxy Voting.—No vote by any member of the Committee with respect to any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(e) Postponing Proceedings.—The Chair may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment; and may resume proceedings on a postponed question after reasonable notice. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

RULE 5—SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) Establishment and Jurisdiction—

(1) There shall be five Subcommittees of the Committee with jurisdictions as follows:

(A) Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over compensation; general and special pensions of all the wars of the United States; life insurance issued by the Government on account of service in the Armed Forces; cemeteries of the United States in which veterans of any war or conflict are or may be buried, whether in the United States or abroad, except cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior; burial benefits; the Board of Veterans' Appeals; and the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

(B) Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over education of veterans, employment and training of veterans, vocational rehabilitation, veterans' housing programs (including homeless veterans housing), transition of servicemembers to civilian life, veteran-owned business concerns, and servicemembers civil relief.

(C) Subcommittee on Health, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) including medical services, community care, medical support and compliance, medical facilities, medical and prosthetic research, provision of healthcare to homeless veterans, and major and minor construction.

(D) Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, which shall have oversight and investigative jurisdiction over veterans' matters generally, information technology and procurement generally, and over such matters as may be referred to the Subcommittee by the Chair of the full Committee for its

oversight or investigation and for its appropriate recommendations. The Subcommittee shall have legislative jurisdiction over such bills or resolutions as may be referred to it by the Chair of the full Committee.

(E) Subcommittee on Technology Modernization, which shall have legislative, oversight and investigative jurisdiction over Department of Veterans Affairs' enterprise technology modernization programs and projects, including the Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) program, enterprise information technology governance, cybersecurity matters, and data management.

(2) Each Subcommittee shall have responsibility for such other measures or matters as the Chair refers to it.

(b) Vacancies.—Any vacancy in the membership of a Subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of that Subcommittee.

(c) Ratios.—On each Subcommittee, there shall be a ratio of majority party members to minority party members, which shall be consistent with the ratio on the full Committee.

(d) Referral to Subcommittees.—The Chair of the Committee may refer a measure or matter, which is within the general responsibility of more than one of the Subcommittees of the Committee, as the Chair deems appropriate. In referring any measure or matter to a Subcommittee, the Chair of the Committee may specify a date by which the Subcommittee shall report thereon to the Committee.

(e) Powers and Duties—

(1) Each Subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full Committee on all matters referred to it or under its jurisdiction. Subcommittee Chairs shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective Subcommittees after consultation with the Chair of the Committee and other Subcommittee chairs with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and Subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

(2) Whenever a Subcommittee has ordered a bill, resolution, or other matter to be reported to the Committee, the Chair of the Subcommittee reporting the bill, resolution, or matter to the full Committee, or any member authorized by the Subcommittee to do so, shall notify the Chair and the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee of the Subcommittee's action.

(3) A member of the Committee who is not a member of a Subcommittee may sit with the Subcommittee during any of its meetings and hearings, but shall not have authority to vote, cannot be counted for a quorum, and cannot raise a point of order at the meeting or hearing.

(4) The Chair and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee shall be ex-officio members of each standing Subcommittee to which the Chair or Ranking Minority Member have not been assigned. Ex-officio members shall have the right to fully participate in Subcommittee activities but may not vote and may not be counted in establishing a quorum.

(5) Non-Committee members may be invited to sit at the dais for and participate in Subcommittee hearings with the unanimous consent of all Members present. Further, non-Committee

members may be recognized for questioning of witnesses but only after all Subcommittee members have first been recognized for questioning.

(6) Each Subcommittee shall provide the full Committee with copies of such record votes taken in Subcommittee and such other records with respect to the Subcommittee as the Chair of the Committee deems necessary for the Committee to comply with the House rules.

RULE 6—GENERAL OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY

(a) Purpose.—Pursuant to House Rule X clause 2, the Committee shall carry out oversight responsibilities consistent with clause 1(s) of House Rule X and Committee Rule 5.

(b) Oversight Plan.—Not later than March 1 of the first session of a Congress, the Chair shall prepare, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, an oversight plan for that Congress; provide a copy of that plan to each member of the Committee for at least seven calendar days before its submission; and submit the plan (including any supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views submitted by a member of the Committee) to the Committee on Oversight and Reform and the Committee on House Administration, in accordance with House Rule X clause 2(d).

(c) Oversight by Subcommittees.—The existence and activities of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations shall in no way limit the responsibility of the other Subcommittees of the Committee for carrying out oversight duties.

(d) Pursuant to House Rule XI clause 1(b), the Committee may conduct at any time such investigations and studies as it considers necessary or appropriate in the exercise of its responsibilities under Rule X.

RULE 7—BUDGET ACT RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) Budget Act Responsibilities.—Pursuant to clause 4(f)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall submit to the Committee on the Budget not later than six weeks after submission of the budget by the President, or at such time as the Committee on the Budget may request—

(1) Its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year that are within its jurisdiction or functions; and

(2) An estimate of the total amounts of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting therefrom, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction that it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

RULE 8—RECORDS AND OTHER MATTERS

(a) Transcripts.—There shall be a transcript made of each meeting and hearing of the Committee. Any such transcript shall be a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typo-

graphical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved.

(b) Records.—(1) The Committee shall keep a record of all Committee action. The record shall contain all information required by clause 2(e)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House and shall be available for public inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee.

(2) There shall be kept in writing a record of the proceedings of the Committee, including a record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is taken. The result of each such record vote shall be made publicly available by the Committee in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote. Information so available shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition, the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members present but not voting.

(c) Availability of Archived Records.—The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with House Rule VII. The Chair shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision made by the Clerk of the House, pursuant to clause 4 of House Rule VII, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a vote on written request of any member of the Committee.

(d) Availability of Adopted Amendments.—Not later than 24 hours after the adoption of any amendment, or 48 hours after the disposition or withdrawal of any other amendment, to a measure or matter considered by the Committee, the Chair shall cause the text of each such amendment to be made publicly available in electronic form on a repository operated by the House Clerk.

(e) Availability of Publications.—Pursuant to clause 2(e)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form to the maximum extent feasible.

RULE 9—TRAVEL

(a) Requirements for Travel.—All requests for travel, funded by the Committee, for members and staff in connection with activities or subject matters under the general jurisdiction of the Committee, shall be submitted to the Chair for approval or disapproval. All travel requests should be submitted to the Chair at least five working days in advance of the proposed travel. For all travel funded by any other source, notice shall be given to the Chair at least five working days in advance of the proposed travel. All travel requests shall be submitted to the Chair in writing and include—

- (1) The purpose of the travel.
- (2) The dates during which the travel is to occur.
- (3) The names of the locations to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.
- (4) The names of members and staff of the Committee for whom the authorization is sought. Travel by the minority shall be submitted to the Chair via the Ranking Member.

(b) Trip Reports.—Members and staff shall make a written report to the Chair within 15 working days on all travel approved under this subsection. Reports shall include a description of their itinerary, expenses, and activities, and pertinent information gained as a result of such travel.

When travel involves majority and minority members or staff, the majority shall submit the report to the Chair on behalf of the majority and minority. The minority may append additional remarks to the report at their discretion.

(c) Applicability of House Rules.—Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, and rules of the House and of the Committee on House Administration.

RULE 10—FACILITY NAMING

(a) Facility Naming.—No Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility or property shall be named after any individual by the Committee unless—

(1) Such individual is deceased and was—

(A) A veteran who (i) was instrumental in the construction or the operation of the facility to be named, or (ii) was a recipient of the Medal of Honor or, as determined by the Chair and Ranking Minority Member, otherwise performed military service of an extraordinarily distinguished character;

(B) A member of the United States House of Representatives or Senate who had a direct association with such facility;

(C) An Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, a Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a Secretary of Defense or of a service branch, or a military or other Federal civilian official of comparable or higher rank; or

(D) An individual who, as determined by the Chair and Ranking Minority Member, performed outstanding service for veterans.

(2) Each member of the Congressional delegation representing the State in which the designated facility is located must indicate in writing such member's support of the proposal to name such facility after such individual. Evidence of a member's support in writing may either be in the form of a letter to the Chair and Ranking Member or co-sponsorship of legislation proposing to name the particular VA facility in question.

(3) The pertinent State department or chapter of each Congressionally chartered veterans' organization having a national membership of at least 500,000 must indicate in writing its support of such proposal.

(b) The above criteria for naming a VA facility may be waived by unanimous consent.

RULE 11—MEDIA COVERAGE

(a) Media Coverage.—Any meeting of the Committee that is open to the public shall be open to coverage by radio, television, and still photography in accordance with the provisions of clause 4(f) of House Rule XI as follows:

(1) If audio or visual coverage of the hearing or meeting is to be presented to the public as live coverage, that coverage shall be conducted and presented without commercial sponsorship.

(2) The allocation among the television media of the positions or the number of television cameras permitted by a Committee Chair in a hearing or meeting room shall be in accordance with fair and equitable procedures devised by the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(3) Television cameras shall be placed so as not to obstruct in any way the space between a witness giving evidence or testimony and any member of the Committee or the visibility of that witness and that member to each other.

(4) Television cameras shall operate from fixed positions but may not be placed in positions that obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing or meeting by the other media.

(5) Equipment necessary for coverage by the television and radio media may not be installed in, or removed from, the hearing or meeting room while the Committee is in session. (6)(A) Except as provided in subdivision (B), floodlights, spotlights, strobe lights, and flashguns may not be used in providing any method of coverage of the hearing or meeting.

(B) The television media may install additional lighting in a hearing or meeting room, without cost to the Government, in order to raise the ambient lighting level in a hearing or meeting room to the lowest level necessary to provide adequate television coverage of a hearing or meeting at the current state of the art of television coverage.

(7) If requests are made by more of the media than will be permitted by the Committee Chair for coverage of a hearing or meeting by still photography, that coverage shall be permitted on the basis of a fair and equitable pool arrangement devised by the Standing Committee of Press Photographers.

(8) Photographers may not position themselves between the witness table and the members of the Committee at any time during the course of a hearing or meeting.

(9) Photographers may not place themselves in positions that obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing by the other media.

(10) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media shall be currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(11) Personnel providing coverage by still photography shall be currently accredited to the Press Photographers' Gallery.

(12) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media and by still photography shall conduct themselves and their coverage activities in an orderly and unobtrusive manner.